in co-operative work, while the system of recruiting inspectors, who form the backbone of the department, cannot be considered free from defect. The work that lies ahead for the department is difficult and complicated, and Government are giving their most careful consideration to the whole question.

15. Geology.—The Department of Geology is an indispensable handmaid to the Department of Industries, and more especially so in a country like Travancore, which is believed to have vast potential mineral resources. This department, although manned by an expert whose knowledge of Geology and applied Chemistry is up-to-date, has not been working on economic lines, and has been rendering but little contribution to the acceleration of industrial expansion in the State. Government have recently issued instructions to the State Geologist to change his methods of work, and instead of confining himself to scientific research, to supplement it by an examination of the chief mineral resources of economic value, and to submit practical proposals for the industrial utilisation of such resources. The staff of the Geologist will be so strengthened as to enable him to carry out this work side by side with the conduct of scientific research.

16. Excise.—I do not propose to detain you long on the subject of Excise. This Department, as I have already said, did exceedingly well under Mr. N. Raman Pillai, the late Commissioner, and is run on approved lines, and no radical changes appear to be called for in the methods of its work. A great deal has already been done to give an impetus to the manufacture of home salt, and about 150 acres of land have recently been added to the salt-producing area of the State. Nothing appreciable, however, has been done to prevent the deterioration of the existing salt pans as a result of the percolation of water from the Kodayar channels. This question has now been taken up for solution by the Government and orders have been issued for the execution of the works necessary for keeping off such water from the salt pans.

17. Arrack and Molasses.—There is one direction in which Government propose to co-ordinate the work of the Excise Department with that of the Department of Industries. This consists in the introduction of a change in the method of arrack distillation in the Government distilleries and especially in the one at Nagercoil. Government are anxious that the very considerable quantities of sugar-cane and palmyra jaggery available in the country should be utilised locally in the manufacture of sugar, and that the distilleries should distil arrack from the waste molasses obtained in the sugar-refining process, in lieu of the present wasteful method of distilling it direct from jaggery. With a view to accomplish this object, Government are inducing capitalists to start a State-aided sugar-refinery, the molasses from which may be taken over by the Government distilleries.

18. Forests.—The Forest Department is one of the major departments of the State, and its activities proceed on well-regulated and well-recognised lines. No important changes are therefore necessary in the matter of its administration. One or two defects, such as the sale of timber-growth by coupes, which were the features of the administration of this department by his predecessor in office, have already been rectified by the present Conservator. The contribution by the Forest Department to the State exchequer which averages Rs. 15 lakhs a year cannot, however, be said to be adequate when the richness and the vastness of our forest area are considered, and the direction in which future action is clearly called for is the utilisation, to greater effect, of the economic resources of the forests and the adoption of methods of accelerating natural regeneration, including the replacement of forest products extracted for economic purposes. In other words, an economic survey of our forests has become a matter of imperative necessity, and such survey, in order to be useful, must be undertaken by a forest economist of proved ability and experience. Having ascertained the economic value of the several forest products together with the extent of their available supply, it will be the turn for the Forest Utilisation Officer to suggest measures for the conversion of those products into marketable articles, and the Sylviculturist will have to suggest measures for the recuperation of the exploited forests. The Madras Government and the State of Mysore have been for

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